

The Lion

September 2009 Vol. CXXXIV, No. 09

*An Unofficial Newsletter for Members Only of
Saint Mark's Parish, Denver, Colorado*

Founded 1875

THE CHAPEL OF ST. LAURENCE AT TALLAHASSEE CREEK

IT'S DIFFICULT to find a gathering of people thirty strong who all have the same expression on their faces. Though it happens. I've seen it happen before my concerts, when I'm wearing my tux and waiting in the wings of some church with fifty other singers, all with the same expression of serious calm. I've seen a unified expression of intent, child-like glee on the audience of a rock concert at the Fillmore. And at St. Laurence, the face in style was an expression of "Gosh, look at this cool thing. Wow."

I guess it wasn't quite awe inducing, it wasn't quite breath taking. But everyone had a look on their face like their expectations had been exceeded. As if they'd come, expecting to see just another church in the woods, but hadn't realized that meant they were going to see a Church out in the woods.

A prominent face in the crowd was Tamarra McCrossen. Mme. McCrossen cooked for us, and cleaned dishes, and was generally available to know about things. I understand she's the person to speak with on any point of St. Laurence organizational curiosity. She's well-versed in Tallahassee Creek lore, and provided much wisdom and protein during the weekend we spent there.

The place is going to be gorgeous when we get art put in it. Right now, it's beautiful. The chapel itself (coming in at a whopping enormous feet tall and a way-lotta-inches long) is has a pristine, white interior. The floor's got a peculiar, translucent quality. I think it's a peculiar quality mostly because it's a brown, concrete floor. How concrete can have a "translucent" quality is beyond my ken. Ask Stephen

Greenlee about it. The pale wood ceiling is high, vaulting like sky, and moves sound around like songs ought to be moved. We sang there.

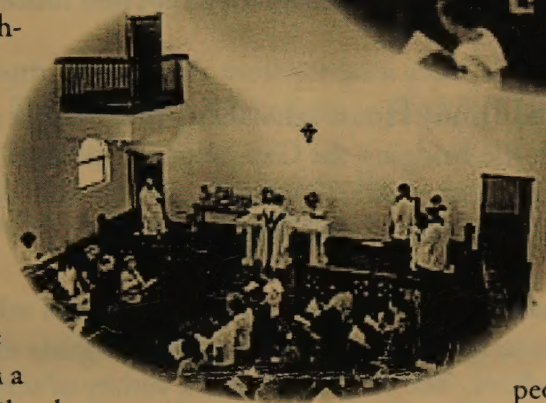
The space is well designed for singing. Hearing song and chant there is pleasurable. Me and my mum and dad and sister and Subdeacon John Woolley tested the space with some excessively loud Bach in four part harmony. Quite enjoyable.

It's a bare, spare building. Before people arrived for the retreat it was especially bare. Arrive they did, and made the chapel echo, and a potentiality of the space was realized. The reverb quality there is incredible. With all these people there--exploring it, liking it--a more potentiality arose.

Everyone I talked to there, when I showed them around, said they liked the space and the location. And they kept asking questions, and they kept making suggestions for additions. Not improvements, mind you, of the things already built. Contentment prevailed about the facilities in general, I believe. People made suggestions for things to add--rope courses, icons, and stuff of coolness like that. Imaginations were sparked: battle won.

St. Laurence is open for business. We're taking reservations for events. Tell everyone you know to come and gaze in child-like glee."

--Oliver





Trinity House – Too Important to Abandon by Frank Zaveral

Trinity House, Inc. originally was formed as an Orthodox Christian outreach program in the Denver metropolitan area to provide a foster care group home, but which instead has evolved into other services for youth. Trinity House wishes to continue these services, God willing, and with the help of the Orthodox Christian community and others.

Two fun events were sponsored. The first was a private showing of the "Pirates of the Caribbean" movie. Thanks to the Assumption Greek Orthodox Cathedral, a dance was the second social event. Popular dance music was available, including Greek dance lessons wonderfully provided by Father Flegas. Specifically designated contributions covered much of the cost of these events.

The greatest effort has been the Trinity House scholarship program for needy youth, principally foster youth affiliated with the Bridging the Gap program operated by Mile High United Way. To date, 23 scholarships in the amount of \$25,500 plus \$1,250 in other direct assistance have been given with a commitment of an additional \$13,000 in process.

In each case, Trinity House has been a source of "last resort" after all other scholarship possibilities have been explored. One recipient recently received his associate degree, while others are still attending college or a trade school. The students attend a variety of schools including Regis University in Denver, Metro State College, Community College of Denver, other Colorado schools and Spelman College in Atlanta. Each of our students has faced significant adversity in his/her lives. But they prevailed with initiative and courage. As a result they have been active in such diverse things as National Honor Society, gospel choirs, International Thespian Society, theatre, volunteering at food banks, mentoring younger students, painting schools in low income areas . . . this list could continue for pages. Their teachers have written the most amazing things about our recipients: "He truly shines." "A remarkable young man." "I have never seen an individual rally from adversity like . . ." "Strong and determined." "... is a very kind person who looks out for the needs of others."

The needs of others. That is what Trinity House is all about – attempting to follow Our Lord's admonitions to do good like the story of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37) and His exhortation that what we do for those in need, we do for Him (Matthew 25:40).

Conscious of the duty to be good stewards (Matthew 25:14-30), with the remaining funds committed to scholarships this summer and fall, Trinity House will have spent 96.5 percent of its total revenue of \$44,000 (including \$3,100 in interest income and net of fundraising event expenses/printing, mailings and promotions) on youth.

Next on the agenda must be more of the same. The scholarship effort **MUST CONTINUE**. It is too vital a program for some very needy and deserving young people.

Hopefully some kind of fundraiser can occur in the near future, but fundraisers cost money

and sometimes produce little net revenue unless the suggested donation is high and/or the affair is basic.

Needy youth require additional scholarships beyond those in process. We are asking for contributions. Any amount will help. These are difficult economic times for many. But they are even more difficult for teens or young adults who are living on their own, working, contributing to the welfare of the community at large, and trying to get an education, with no family support, financial or otherwise.

Contributions may be mailed to:

Trinity House, Inc., 6700 Eastmoor Drive, Denver, Colorado 80237

or mailed to or dropped off at:

St. Mark's Parish, Attn: Trinity House, 1405 S. Vine Street, Denver, CO 80210

Please pray for all youth, our nation's most precious asset, especially those who are struggling to receive higher education. Prayer works. "Have faith in God." (Mark 11:22)

Trinity House, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) organization and contributions are tax-deductible.

"There is more to citizenship than voting . . . There is more to citizenship than paying your taxes . . . Citizenship is empty without concern for our fellow citizens, without the ties that bind us to one another and building a common good. The same God who endows us with individual rights also calls us to social obligations."
President George W. Bush

"I believe that every right implies a responsibility; every opportunity, an obligation; every possession, a duty."
John D. Rockefeller, Jr.



The opening of St. Laurence Basilica with a teen SOYO Retreat on the Feast of the Dormition / Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary was a result of a vast investment of supervisory work by Reader Stephen Greenlee seen here with his parents Max and Bebe and Fr. John. Stephen attended endless meetings, negotiated with a tiresome and burdensome quantity of Government officials, regulators, inspectors, and odious tax collectors. He also enjoyed some very likable and decent local residents... many of whom believe in Jesus and favor this project. Thanks be to God.

The Eighth Sunday after Trinity

An Edifying Discourse by Subdeacon James Tochiyara Delivered at St. Mark's Parish of Denver

From the Seventh Chapter of St. Matthew: Even so, every good tree bringeth forth good fruit. +

IN today's readings, the words of Jesus and the words of Paul are roughly parallel to each other, and it's worth examining these parallels in order to appreciate their similarities and their particular differences. From Jesus we have: *Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire* (Matt. 7:19). Then, from Paul: *For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die* (Rom. 8:13). We can say that living after the flesh does not bring forth good fruit, and the consequence is eternal death. Once more from Jesus: *Not every one that sayeth unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven: but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven* (Matt. 7:21). Lastly, Paul: *For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father* (Rom. 8:15). From this we see that it is not enough to cry out "Lord, Lord." It is better to receive the Spirit of adoption, and to call Almighty God by the familiar term, Abba, naturally doing what he wills. As we would expect, Jesus and Paul understand the spiritual life in a similar fashion.

Paul, however, addresses us on a more elementary level, and tells us that we must mortify the deeds of the body. This is the practical foundation of all that is being said in the gospel and the epistle. Paul is a celibate man, as is our Lord and many of his apostles, and hundreds of others in Israel at that time. There is only one reason for a Jew to embrace celibacy, or any abstinence from sex, or any fasting or mortification of the flesh, and that is for the sake of the purity of the Temple worship.

The ancient Jewish priests would abstain from sex before they performed their duties in the Temple. This was not a negative rejection of the world. They abstained for the sake of bringing their hearts, minds and bodies into an Eden-like state of cleanliness and purity. They wanted to enter the Temple worthily, they entered Eden spiritually and talked with God as Adam did.

We also must mortify our flesh, not to reject the world or express hatred towards anything that is good, but to enter our Christian Temple, where we spiritually enter Heaven and talk to God. The Gospel today is taken from the tail-end of Matthew's account of the Sermon on the Mount. This sermon from our Lord,

which begins with the Beatitudes, contains the famous admonition that we should be joyful when we fast.

Now, mortification of the flesh is difficult, and we shouldn't pretend that we aren't suffering, but we should still be joyful because we are mortifying ourselves to enter into the promised land overflowing with the milk and honey of eternal peace and unending bliss. If we can't remember this, maybe we should stop fasting. When we mortify our flesh, we are not spanking ourselves or punishing ourselves. There may be times when we need to correct our behavior, but the spiritual practice of mortification focuses on letting go of the world. Behavioral discipline is the exact opposite, and focuses our attention on this world. Mortification is meant to relax the grip that our hearts and minds have on worldly things and worldly expectations.

I think it's interesting that our Lord mentions corrupt trees bringing forth evil fruit. Evil and corruption can still produce fruit. What is the difference between evil fruit and good fruit? Evil fruit comes from the flesh, that is to say, from this fallen world where flesh instinctively rebels against the Spirit. Good fruit comes from Eden and the heavenly Temple, where God's power reigns. We bring forth good fruit by letting go of the world and by clinging to the Lord Jesus, the Rock of Ages, who comes to us in the mysteries of worship that he himself gave to the Apostles. The more we dwell in heaven by praise and worship, the more our soul grows there, blossoming and producing fruit.

Where your heart is, there shall your treasure be. "Treasure" and "fruit" both refer to what a human life has produced, its works. If our hearts love the peace of Christ, then our treasures, our lives, are in heaven, safe from moth and rust and thieves. And in heaven our little treasures will grow—thirty, sixty, and an hundred fold. If our hearts and minds cling to this world, then the judgment that is coming to this world by fire will burn our life and its works. What little we thought we possessed in this world will be taken away.

That is the danger for all of us—to see our life's work judged unworthy and irrelevant by Christ, and to see it consumed in the fires of judgment. Luckily, we have the chance to face judgment now. I don't want to stretch my metaphors too much, but I think that to be a Christian is to place yourself voluntarily on probation, before you have to face the Judge. We can avoid the harshness of God's perfect righteous judgment by dying to ourselves and to the world now, rather than at the end of the world, or at our own deaths, when it is too late.

If we proclaim ourselves a criminals now, we can live in humility led by the Spirit of God, as Christ

A Retreat with the V. Rev'd Patrick Henry Reardon

*The Bible, Spiritual Growth,
and the Life of Prayer*

offered at

St. Laurence Retreat Campus
at Tallahassee Creek, Colorado

15 miles West of Canon City off Hwy 9 on County Road 21

October 15th (evening) to October 17th (noon day)

Costs and other details will be announced soon.

These were not available when we went to press on 5 September, Saturday

For current information check:

<http://saintlaurencosb.org>

Thursday, 15 October

9:15 PM

Compline

Friday, 16 October

7:30 - 8:45

Matins & Mass

8:45 - 9:30

Breakfast

morning

Registration, greeting

10:30 - 12:00

Session 1

12:00 - 1:00

Lunch

1:00 - 2:30

Free Time/Outdoors time

2:30 - 4:00

Session II

4:40 - 5:30

Vespers

6:00 - 7:00

Dinner

7:00 - 9:00

Group Discussion Time

9:15 - 9:45

Compline

Saturday, 17 October

7:30 - 8:45

Matins & Mass

8:45 - 9:30

Breakfast

10:00 - 11:30

Session III

11:45 - 12:45

Lunch

afterward

Guests can stay or head home

ST. LAURENCE RETREAT
CAMPUS at Tallahassee Creek,
Colorado affords sleeping rooms
with in suite baths and a refectory with
seating for forty persons at present. The
Basilica is of a Romanesque design and
the iconography what may be called
"Italo-Byzantine" in its thematic quali-
ties and egg tempera with gold leaf work.

From Denver a beautiful drive to the
site is to take 285 South to Fairplay, then
Hwy 9 South to about the 11 mile marker
and thence West on County Hwy 21 tak-
ing the left fork where the road divides.
The St. Laurence Campus is at the end
of that road beginning at the secure gate.
Past the Caretaker's cabin continue to the
left and park at the Basilica.

God helping further information will
be available by means of the website:

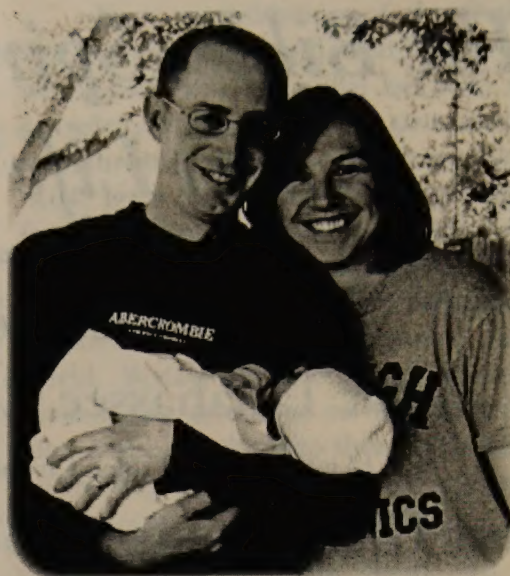
www.saintlaurencosb.org

or calling Fr. John at 303-722-0707

Sarah and Jon Franklin with the newly born Cecelie (a form of Cecilia). Cecelie Rae Franklin was born August 13th at 10:32pm. She weighed 7 lbs, 4.8oz. Everyone is healthy and doing well.

She is already getting spoiled by her Grandma, Aunt and Great-Grandparents!

God bless,
Sarah Franklin



For the month of September please check your weekly bulletin for the Mass Schedule and other events.

7 September, Monday : His Grace Bishop Basil will be present at at St. Mark's 6:00 PM Mass of the Nativity of the BVM and Preaching, a reception follows in the Parish Hall and Piazza San Marco. A vast attendance is anticipated so please come early if you have issues with parking at a distance. The lift is available at the North Entrance on Arkansas Avenue.

10 September, Thursday : His Grace, Bishop Basil will visit the St. Laurence Campus during the day and return for the Clergy Dinner in the evening.

9 October (Compline at 8 PM, Friday) through Saturday and concluding at 2:00 PM Sunday 11 October at St. Laurence Retreat Campus at Tallahassee Creek all directed by V Rev'd Fr. Lester Michael Bundy. Topics: A Benedictine Retreat with worship and study and quiet and meals and some bit of work. Oblates, Clergy, and inquirers are most welcome. For details contact our website at: www.saintlaurenceosb.org

15 October SEE the AD on the next page for FATHER PATRICK HENRY REARDON at St. Laurence

23 October for several Days the V Rev'd. Father Donald David Lloyd, D.D. will visit Saint Mark's and so plan to visit with him and receive his blessing. Fr. Lloyd is Rector emeritus of this Parish and most helpful in his daily intercessions for all the faithful. Thanks be to God.

6 - 8 November Kh. Susan Wallace will offer a Women's Retreat at St. Laurence. Details to follow.

The 2010 Western Rite Calendar should be available for \$9.00 on about 10 September. A vast quantity of liturgical data and Saints Days and meditations are included in what may be the finest WR Calendar ever produced in all history. Lord have mercy.

Various books and devotional aids are offered at: www.andrewespress.com

himself died a criminal on the Roman cross. We do this before Christ may proclaim us criminals in the Latter Days when we may lack the Advocacy of the Holy Ghost. As Paul says, *if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together* (Rom. 8:17).

We have the chance to let go, to die to the world, as much as is appropriate to our station in life. If we die now, we can be risen now in the Spirit. In the Eighth Chapter of the Epistle of Blessed Paul the Apostle to the Romans, the immediately preceding verse to today's reading is this: *But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you* (Rom. 8:11). If there is any spirit of fear in you, die and be resurrected now. Remember your baptismal vows and renounce sin and Satan, and all his pomps and vanities. Our life is a seed that must die and fall to the earth, and then our life can become like a great tree that grows tall and brings forth good fruit.

The easiest, safest, and most effective way to die, to be slain in the Spirit, is to attend the Divine Liturgy. If you need to become a hermit on an abandoned mountainside, engaged in stringent fasts of bread and water, your spiritual director will let you know. But for the rest of us, we can attend the Divine Liturgy, daily Mass if possible, matins and vespers (or at least chant or read them at home), and die to the world while we are at prayer. Death, and especially Resurrection, are happening right now.

So then, what of the false prophets? Our Lord tells us to beware of false prophets which come to us in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravening wolves. The most striking example of this kind of false prophet would be Usama bin Ladin. If you've ever listened to bin Ladin, you realize that he is soft-spoken, and very sober. He possesses an inner calm, and spends much time in prayer and fasting. This is the sheep's clothing. Inwardly he hungers for global jihad, and longs to see bloodshed. He takes great delight in seeing the humiliation and torture of other human beings whose only offense is their status as non-Muslims.

Of course, we have our false prophets in this country. They cry out, "Lord, Lord," and memorize every verse of scripture. They profess faith in Jesus' holy Name, and spend much time in prayer. This is their sheep's clothing. Yet they twist scripture into bizarre and lurid fantasies, such as the "Left Behind" series of novels, with grotesque visions of global bloodshed. They wait for the rapture, because after the rapture they want to see Jesus punish the world and bring pain to others. Inwardly, they hunger for the humiliation and suffering of other human beings whose only offense is their rejection of this vainly imagined version of

Christianity. They pretend to be peaceful and religious, but only to devour the world as ravening wolves. As scripture has it, *Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord; I will repay* (Rom. 12:19).

Today, death and judgment has come. Bring to the Lord your anger and fear, your desperate hungers and childish impatience, and let him burn them away in the fire of Holy Ghost who descends on this altar.

Today, resurrection and new life has come. Bring to the Lord your anxieties and cares for your future and for your loved ones, bring your worries for your husband, your wife, your children and your parents. Receive his Body and Blood, and let him purify the noble love you have for others. Remain steadfast in Christ's compassionate mercy, and we shall all remain together forever, one Body with Christ as our head.



Katie and Emily Huft have worked to bring the SOYO teens from the Antiochene parishes together. Thanks to all their influence and practical work for the cause of youth in this Deanery. Their parents Dana (Church Women) and Guy (Junior Warden) Huft attended the Progressive Dinner at the end of August with many St. Mark's families. Thanks to the Woolleys and Langons and all who hosted this remarkable social event.



Pastoral Ponderings on the Mystery of Repentance

by The V. Rev'd Patrick Henry Reardon
Rector of All Saints' Church, Chicago



ALTHOUGH REPENTANCE is profitable to the soul, Holy Scripture does not regard it as sufficient to undo the historical effects of sin. That is to say, by repentance I can change the course of my life---and my eternal destiny---but the bad things I have done, and the good things left undone, will still continue to run on their own. My repentance will not undo them. Such is the practical meaning, I take it, of the adage, *factum non fit non factum*---"a thing done cannot become a thing not done."

This truth about repentance was made clear at the discovery of the Deuteronomic Scroll in 622. When this document caused Josiah and his friends to realize how far Judah had wandered into sin, they immediately repented (2 Kings 22:3-13). The prophetess Huldah, consulted on this matter, assured them that the Lord accepted their repentance (22:18-20), but she also warned that their repentance would not avert the historical effects of so much sin. The accumulated transgressions of numerous generations would still bring about the destruction of the nation (22:14-17). Part of Josiah's repentance was an acceptance of the divine judgment on the nation.

Indeed, I believe an integral component of repentance is the grace to leave in God's provident hands the historical judgment of the manifold evil effects of our sins. We repentant sinners make such amends as we can (cf. Luke 19:8), but none of us can even know---much less avert---all the evil consequences our sins have unleashed in history. These things have already taken on a dynamism of their own, and God will deal with them according to His own wise judgment.

As I mentioned, this truth about repentance pertains, not only to the bad things we have done, but also to the required good things we have failed to do. Only in our later years---long after we made the major decisions that governed our lives---do some of us come to realize how many opportunities we have squandered and how few duties we have fulfilled. But now it is too late: our education is long over, our children have already been raised, further opportunities are few, and our neglected friends lie cold in the tomb.

We find ourselves unable to undo any of it. We weep, with Joel, for "the years the locust hath consumed, the cankerworm, and the caterpillar, and the palmerworm." We are obliged simply to accept the judgment of God, following the

insight of the Psalmist: *iudicia Domini vera, iustificata in semetipsa*---"the judgments of the Lord are true, and righteous altogether."

Two biblical characters particularly exemplify this humble attitude, both of them fathers who came to realize, too late, how poorly they had raised their children. Both men repented, but neither was able to reverse the evil course of their former negligence.

The first was ancient Eli, the priest at Shiloh, who recognized, at last, his failure adequately to discipline his two no-good sons, Phineas and Hophni.

To be sure, Eli had spoken to the boys about the low moral quality of their lives, warning them of the inevitable divine judgment (1 Samuel 2:23-25). When he thought on this judgment, however, Eli considered it only with respect to his two sons: they would not escape God's wrath. He apparently did not perceive the further historical effects of their sins.

So the Lord sent a prophet to forewarn Eli on this point. The flagrant and public offenses of Phineas and Hophni, said this prophet, would in due course destroy Eli's own priestly dynasty (2:27-36)---evidently a reference to Saul's slaughter of the Nob priesthood (22:11-19).

Finally, the Lord appointed young Samuel to strengthen the message to Eli: "In that day I will perform against Eli all that I have spoken concerning his house, from beginning to end. For I have told him that I will judge his house forever for the iniquity which he knows, because his sons made themselves vile, and he did not restrain them" (3:12-13).

Eli's repentance contained a submission to the divine judgment to be revealed in history: "The Lord, let Him do what seems good to Him" (3:18).

We find the identical sentiment later voiced by David, for he, too, had been an over-indulgent father and raised a thoroughly dysfunctional family. (Incest and fratricide are reliable indicators, usually.) Faced with the results of his long sinful neglect, David responded, "But if [the Lord] says thus: 'I have no delight in you,' here I am, let Him do to me as seems good to Him" (2 Samuel 15:26).

Repentance, then, as a turning from sin to God, involves more than a release from personal guilt. It means, also, handing over to the Lord's judgment and providential care the countless historical effects of our myriad failures. That is to say, repentance places not only our individual lives but also our larger destiny---the myriad links that join us to the rest of mankind---under God's sovereign governance of history. Repentance makes us *participes rei*, partakers of a thing vastly larger than ourselves.

The Moving Pictures Reviewed by Prof.
John W. Brainerd for the Benefit of the Duly
Cautious and Not Unduly Curious Faithful

The Proposal

THE *PROPOSAL*, starring Sandra Bullock and Ryan Reynolds, tells the story of Margaret (Bullock), hard-nosed book editor with no life outside her work, who suddenly finds herself facing deportation "I'm Canadian, that doesn't really count, does it?" She responds. She is such a workaholic, that she hasn't returned the phone calls of her emigration lawyer, and has inadvertently let her work visa lapse. She learns of her little problem from her boss. When her long suffering administrative assistant Andrew (Reynolds) walks in on the meeting, she tells her boss that deportation is no longer a problem, as she and Andrew are engaged to be married. Andrew is dumbstruck. Margaret quickly hurries him out of the room, before he can protest. He agrees to a sham wedding, to satisfy the emigration service, but only if she agrees to make him an editor.

The leads in this film have a nice chemistry. Bullock and Reynolds manage to instill their nearly constant bickering with just the right amount of acid. You really do get a sense that Andrew is just insecure enough, and yet just ambitious enough, to have stayed in his job working for Margaret, the "Boss from Hell" for three and a half years. Margaret, on the other hand, has never given a single thought to Andrew, other than whether he knows what kind of coffee she likes from Starbucks. As you might expect, they have various comedic moments and eventually warm up to each other.

Betty White, Mary Steenburgen, and Craig T. Nelson were all convincing and very funny as Andrew's grandmother, mother, and father, respectively. The leads were good as well, and oh so very beautiful. Much of the film takes place in spectacularly beautiful settings. Everyone and everything was so beautiful, in fact, that the movie had a surreal, almost fairy tale quality to it. Nobody really had serious problems. Everybody had plenty of money. Even Andrew's ex-girlfriend, Gert (played by Malin Akerman), was kind and understanding, giving Margaret advice on how to handle Andrew's family. Margaret and Andrew complain and fight, but nothing really bad happens to them, either.

So, if everyone and everything is so beautiful, and nothing really bad happens, are there lessons to be learned? Perhaps. I think the film can be enjoyed as a fairy tale. The impossibly beautiful woman, who has a heart of stone, is forced to admit the handsome young man into her life. As he struggles to honor his commitment, and she struggles to save her livelihood, she finds herself able to trust him. Her heart starts to open to him. He in turn, through their shared lie forcing them to cooperate and trust each other, finds an ally and reliable friend. After all, the start of any loving relationship is a mutual friendship and trust.

In fact, odd as it may sound, the relationship between Margaret and Andrew developed almost like I'd imagine an arranged marriage relationship might develop. Initially, they knew little about each other, just as people often do in an arranged marriage. They had a mutual contract (in the film, the agreement to pretend to be engaged, in an arranged marriage, obviously, the marriage contract), which forced them to cooperate. Gradually, through

honoring their contract, they develop a working relationship and a trust in each other. Their lie let them develop a private understanding or intimacy that they couldn't share with others, just as a man and a woman have a private intimacy in marriage that is theirs alone. A marriage is two people learning to trust and eventually love each other; not love in the emotional heart palpitating sense, but in the sense of knowing someone deeply, trusting that person, being able to count on them, and knowing they count on you. We see the development of Margaret and Andrew's relationship growing through work and cooperation, rather than (as is so often the case with Hollywood film romance) through 'dating', 'sleepovers on or before the first date', and 'fun weekends in the Hamptons'. Thus we see them taking the first steps towards true intimacy and love, with nary a sexual encounter or romantic moment to be found.

During my preparations for marriage, my wife and I were taught that one of the purposes of marriage was to learn, through learning to love our spouse, how better to love God. Obviously, it is difficult to 'date' God, or to have a 'fun weekend in the Hamptons' with Him. Now this doesn't mean that 'dating' or a 'fun weekend in the Hamptons' are wrong things to do or evil. God wouldn't have bothered to make so many wonderful and beautiful things in our world if He didn't intend us to enjoy them. However, it is possible, and necessary, to learn to trust God, and to learn to talk with him and cooperate with Him. The time I spend working with and learning to trust my wife helps me to understand how to trust others, and how to trust God. In the same way, I think that Margaret and Andrew's time spent learning to trust and thereby love each other shows us how through learning to trust and love others, we can learn to trust and love God.

I liked *The Proposal*. I found the lead characters funny and charming. The supporting characters were well written and well acted. The scenery for much of the film was gorgeous. Finally, I enjoyed the lead characters' relationship deviation from the usual Hollywood romantic comedy fare, by showing them having to cooperate with each other, and through their cooperation, learn to love each other.

Quick Hits

Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince

THIS LATEST installment of the Harry Potter franchise, is a good movie. This was a surprise to me, as I found the *Half-Blood Prince* book, while interesting, to be a sort of filler in the overall Harry Potter series. J. K. Rowling contracted to do seven books, and she needed to fill in pieces of the background story, hence *Half-Blood Prince* (I know many of the true-blue Harry Potter fans out there will object to this description, but that is just how I saw it). While some of the earlier Harry Potter films suffered from a slavish devotion to the plot of the books, *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince* is an exciting, dramatic film. Harry and his friend are growing up; so are their relationships, and their enemies. In Voldemort's quest to make himself immortal, the body count continues to rise, both in the Wizard and Muggle worlds. Quidditch is played, battles are fought, old secrets are discovered, friends are betrayed. Will Voldemort triumph? Will Harry survive? Stay tuned for the final two installments (yes, they are splitting *Deathly Hallows* into two movies).

(500) Days of Summer

NOW let's talk about the other kind of Hollywood movie, the kind where 'if you love someone' then 'you just know it, you get that feeling'. (500) Days of Summer tells the story of Tom (Joseph Gordon-Levitt), architect school graduate who, instead of pursuing his dream of becoming a great architect, writes copy for a greeting card company. His other dream is of meeting 'his one true love, his soul mate'. He meets Summer (Zooey Deschanel) and is convinced he has finally found 'the one'. Summer on the other hand claims not to believe in love. This all plays out against the backdrop of a New York-like Los Angeles, with the characters taking cabs around town, and even walking here and there. The film is well acted and quite clever, with the scenes edited together out of order. We see them meet, then we see their fight towards the end of their first year, then we see their second date, etc. So, while certainly a pleasant enough film, with quality writing and acting, I was left with a feeling that the lead characters, though certainly as clever as the film makers could make them, had little happiness to show for all of their cleverness.

The Hurt Locker

TENSE, gritty, forceful, haunting. All of these words describe this great film about soldiers combating the killer of over half of all American soldiers in Iraq and thousands of Iraqis: Improvised Explosive Devices or IEDs. IEDs are homemade bombs designed to disrupt every (part of the Army's Explosive Ordnance Disposal Squad) and Staff Sergeant William James (Jeremy Renner), when their previous commander is killed on a routine mission. The tension mounts as James' disregard for protocol and procedures seems to further endanger his team with each mission. But, is he really the reckless cowboy he seems to be, or a consummate professional who has gone beyond the procedures to an intuitive knowledge of the solution to each IED? With a strong cast, scary real setting (the film was shot in Morocco), and great subplots involving the three main characters and Iraqi characters, *The Hurt Locker* is a must see film about all the psychological and physical terror and dangers involved in our American soldiers fighting for their lives and ultimately our freedom in Iraq.



William and Tricia Langan hosted the desert course of the famous Progressive Dinner this year and are with the Lickteigs in this photograph. Thanks to all who participated in this fabulous Fund Raiser for the projects of the Church Women.



Thanks to the local SOYO and sponsors, especially Tamara McCrossen for logistical preparations, Dr. Woolley for most edifying talks, Fr. Bundy for preaching, Oliver and Claire for coaching and leading the many chant and hymn performances and to all the parents who made the Retreat over the Assumption weekend such a profound and happy Spiritual experience.



Christopher Demetrios Vaughn with his pious Mom on the Day he performed an introduc-

tory Recital on the newly rebuilt and much finer Pipe Organ at St. Mark's. Thanks to Christopher for his gifts and all who contributed to the Pipes!

ON

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address correction requested



The Lion is an unofficial, unloved, and uncompensated newsletter of St. Mark's Parish of Denver, Colorado.

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